

Message Text

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12

ACTION ACDA-10

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USNMR SHAPE

USCINCEUR

S E C R E T MBFR VIENNA 0435

FROM US REP MBFR

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, NATO

SUBJECT: MBFR: CONVERSATION WITH SOVIET REPS ON NOVEMBER
21, 1974

1. BEGIN SUMMARY: US REP AND DEPREP HAD A LUNCH
NOVEMBER 21 WITH SOVIET REPS KHLESTOV AND SMIRNOVSKY
AT INVITATION OF SOVIETS. NO NEW ELEMENTS EMERGED FROM
CONVERSATION. SOVIET REPS TOOK STANDARD LINE AGAINST
DATA DISCUSSION PRIOR TO SOLUTION OF "QUESTIONS OF
PRINCIPLE;" NEED FOR FEDERAL GERMAN PARTICIPATION IN
REDUCTIONS FROM THE OUTSET; NEED FOR NATIONAL CEILINGS ON
FEDERAL GERMAN FORCES; AND DESIRABILITY OF EASTERN FIRST
STEP PROPOSAL. SOVIET REPS ONCE AGAIN CRITICIZED WESTERN
FIRST PHASE PROPOSAL AS PERMITTING UNCONTROLLED INCREASES
IN AIR AND NUCLEAR FORCES. END SUMMARY.

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2. US REP BEGAN CONVERSATION BY ASKING SOVIET REP WHETHER SOVIETS HAD GIVEN FURTHER CONSIDERATION TO WESTERN PROPOSAL FOR EXCHANGE OF DATA. US REP REVIEWED REASONS WHY ALLIES CONSIDERED THIS MOVE WOULD BE IN THE MUTUAL INTEREST AND HOW ALLIES HAD ALREADY SHOWN THEIR GOOD FAITH ON THE DATA ISSUE. KHLESTOV REPLIED THAT THE SOVIETS HAD GIVEN THIS PROPOSAL SERIOUS CONSIDERATION. THEY HAD CONCLUDED THAT THEIR POSITION WAS CORRECT: IT WAS NECESSARY TO RESOLVE OTHER QUESTIONS FIRST, ESPECIALLY THE ISSUE OF WHOSE FORCES SHOULD BE REDUCED FROM THE OUTSET. ONE COULD NOT "DROWN" DISCUSSION OF THIS KEY SUBJECT BY GETTING OFF ON A DIVERSIONARY DISCUSSION OF DATA.

3. US REP POINTED OUT THAT ALLIES HAD SUGGESTED THAT DATA BE DISCUSSED CONCURRENTLY WITH THE OTHER SUBJECTS. ALLIES HAD NO DESIRE TO PRECLUDE DISCUSSION OF OTHER SUBJECTS WHICH COULD PROCEED IN PARALLEL.

4. US REP SAID THAT SOVIET INITIAL STEP REDUCTION PROPOSAL WAS NOT ACCEPTABLE AS BASIS OF NEGOTIATION. ALLIES WERE INTERESTED IN SUBSTANTIAL INITIAL REDUCTIONS, NOT SYMBOLIC START. THE REMAINDER OF SOVIET NOVEMBER 8, 1973 PROPOSAL HAD AT LEAST HAD THE VIRTUE OF ENVISAGING SIZEABLE REDUCTIONS. KHLESTOV SAID THAT THIS PROPOSAL WAS STILL ON THE TABLE. US REP SAID OVERALL SOVIET PROPOSAL POSED THE SAME DATA PROBLEM IN ACUTE FORM. THE PROPOSAL SPOKE OF REDUCING 5 PERCENT OF "X" NUMBER OF FORCES AND THEN 10 PERCENT OF "X" NUMBER OF FORCES. WHAT WAS "X?" SOVIET RETICENCE ON THE SUBJECT OF DATA WAS CREATING A BAD IMPRESSION.

5. KHLESTOV AND SMIRNOVSKY CLAIMED THAT ALL DATA ISSUES WOULD BE RESOLVED AFTER ISSUES OF PRINCIPLE HAD BEEN SETTLED THROUGH DISCUSSION OF THE PROPOSED PROTOCOL WHICH WOULD SPECIFY THE FORCES TO BE WITHDRAWN. US REP SAID IT WAS UNREALISTIC TO EXPECT COUNTRIES ON WHOSE SECURITY REDUCTIONS WOULD HAVE A DIRECT IMPACT TO AGREE TO A CERTAIN TYPE OF REDUCTIONS IN PRINCIPLE WITHOUT KNOWING WHAT THIS WOULD MEAN FOR THEM IN SPECIFIC QUANTITATIVE TERMS.

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6. SMIRNOVSKY THEN TRIED TO TURN THE SUBJECT TO THEIR GROUND WITH STATEMENT THAT, AS FAR AS DATA WAS CONCERNED, EAST WANTED TO HEAR FIGURES ABOUT FEDERAL GERMAN REDUCTIONS, HOW MUCH AND WHEN, BEFORE THEY GOT INTO DISCUSSION OF OTHER DATA TOPICS. KHLESTOV CHIMED IN, CLAIMING THAT, EVEN WITH ALLIED NON-INCREASE PROPOSAL, FRG COULD INCREASE ITS FORCES IN THE PERIOD BETWEEN THE PHASES AND, UNDER

THE COLLECTIVE COMMON CEILING PROPOSED BY THE ALLIES, EVEN AFTER A SECOND PHASE. THIS WAS UNACCEPTABLE. SMIRNOVSKY AND KHLESTOV THEN COMPLAINED THAT THE ALLIES HAD OMITTED AIR AND NUCLEAR FORCES FROM THEIR REDUCTION PROPOSAL. THESE FORCES COULD INCREASE IN THE EVENT THAT AN AGREEMENT COVERED ONLY GROUND FORCES. WHAT WAS THE POINT OF DISCUSSING DATA UNLESS THERE WAS AN AGREEMENT TO REDUCE THESE FORCES TOO?

7. US REP SAID ALLIES WERE NOT INTERESTED IN SMALL SYMBOLIC REDUCTIONS. THEY WANTED REDUCTIONS OF MILITARY SIGNIFICANCE. UNLESS AGREED REDUCTIONS WERE MILITARILY SIGNIFICANT, THE EAST WOULD GAIN MORE THAN THE WEST FROM A FORCE REDUCTION AGREEMENT. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF FRANCE, NEARLY ALL THE FORCES IN WESTERN EUROPE WOULD COME UNDER SOME FORM OF LIMITATION. BUT ON THE EASTERN SIDE, SOVIET FORCES WOULD ONLY BE WITHDRAWN AND NOT REDUCED, AND LIMITATIONS ON THE FORCES OF THE GDR, POLAND AND CZECHOSLOVAKIA WERE NOT OF EQUIVALENT VALUE TO THE WEST. THE EAST SHOULD DROP THE INITIAL REDUCTION STEP PROPOSAL AND LOOK FOR SOME MORE PRODUCTIVE POINT ON WHICH TO MAKE A REAL ENTRY INTO THE OVERALL SUBJECT MATTER OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. DATA EXCHANGE WAS ONE PRODUCTIVE POSSIBILITY.

8. KHLESTOV INDICATED THAT HE ACCEPTED THAT MATTERS WERE AT A STANDSTILL. NEVERTHELESS, HE STATED THAT HE WAS NOT PESSIMISTIC ABOUT THE OUTCOME OF THE NEGOTIATIONS. HE SAID SOVIETS BELIEVED THAT ALL PARTICIPANTS WERE MAKING A SINCERE EFFORT TO SEEK SOLUTIONS EVEN IF NO PRACTICAL START HAD YET BEEN FOUND. RESOR

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